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US Department of the Interior News Briefing



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DOI In The News

Trump May Strip Protections From 10 National Monuments.

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (9/18, Halper) reports that the Trump Administration's plan to reduce "protections at America's national monuments appears far more expansive than previously reported, targeting 10 of the nation's most ecologically sensitive landscapes and marine preserves for diminished protection." The plan submitted last month by Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke "would shrink the borders at half a dozen monuments and ocean preserves and open four others up for uses such as commercial fishing, logging and coal mining, according to a copy of the blueprint obtained by the Wall Street Journal and Washington Post." The Times says the plan, if enacted, would have a "dramatic" impact on the West.

The [New York Times](#) (9/18, Turkewitz, Popovich, McCann) lists the 10 monuments "designated for changes under Mr. Zinke's proposal." They are: Bears Ears, Utah; Gold Butte, Nevada; Grand Staircase-Escalante, Utah; Cascade-Siskiyou, Oregon and California; Pacific Remote Islands, Pacific Ocean; Rose Atoll, Pacific Ocean; Katahdin Woods and Waters, Maine; Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks, New Mexico; Rio Grande del Norte, New Mexico; and Northeast Canyons and Seamounts, Atlantic Ocean.

David Muir said on [ABC World News Tonight](#) (9/18, story 11, 0:20) that President Trump has suggested "that former presidents wrongly seized the property." [USA Today](#) (9/18, Sullivan) writes that the draft report quotes Zinke saying adherence to the 1906 Antiquities Act definitions "were either arbitrary or likely politically motivated or boundaries could not be supported by science or reasons of practical resource management."

[Reuters](#) (9/18, Harvey, Volcovici, Gardner) reports that "Zinke also called for relaxing current restrictions within some of the monuments' boundaries for activities such as grazing, logging, coal mining and commercial fishing." The [AP](#) (9/18, Daly) says that the draft report recommendations "cap an unprecedented four-month review based on Trump's claim that 1906 Antiquities Act has been misused by recent presidents to create oversized monuments that hinder energy development, grazing and other uses."

[BBC News \(UK\)](#) (9/18) reports that Zinke also "suggests exploring the possibility of recognising three new national monuments: Kentucky's Camp Nelson, an 1863 Union Army outpost where African American regiments trained; the Mississippi home of murdered civil rights leader Medgar Evers; and the Badger-Two Medicine area in Montana, which is sacred ground for the Blackfeet Nation."

The [Washington Post](#) (9/18, Eilperin) reports that "environmental and outdoor recreation groups threatened Monday to sue if President Trump adopts Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's leaked proposal to alter nearly a dozen national monuments, while grazing, fishing and other groups welcomed the recommendations." Meanwhile, "former Interior secretary Sally Jewell, who oversaw several of the monument designations Zinke is proposing to alter, said in an interview Monday that 'the protections that are written into the proclamations are in many cases what he's trying to undo, in his recommendations to President Trump.'" She added, "It's a monument in name only if all the activities that are identified by Secretary Zinke are allowed to occur."

The [Deseret \(UT\) News](#) (9/18, O'Donoghue) reports that Rep. Rob Bishop, chairman of the House Committee on Natural Resources, "criticized the monument leak." Bishop said in a statement, "The fact this was leaked is troubling and merits an immediate and thorough investigation. The president should have the time to evaluate the secretary's review and develop actions without the encumbrance of incomplete information being leaked to the press."

Also reporting are the [Los Angeles Times](#) (9/18, Halper), the [Monterey County \(CA\) Herald](#)

(9/18, Rogers), the [Riverside \(CA\) Press Enterprise](#) (9/18), the [Ventura County \(CA\) Star](#) (9/18, Roth), the [St. George \(UT\) Spectrum](#) (9/18, DeMille), the [Missoula Current \(MT\)](#) (9/18), the [Albuquerque \(NM\) Journal](#) (9/18, Coleman), the [Daily Intelligencer \(NY\)](#) (9/18, Hart), [Newsweek](#) (9/18, Paton), [TIME](#) (9/18), [The Guardian \(UK\)](#) (9/18, Milman), [The Guardian \(UK\)](#) (9/18, Milman), [BBC News \(UK\)](#) (9/18), [The Week](#) (9/18, Weber), [The Verge](#) (9/18, Becker), [KRWG-FM Las Cruces \(NM\)](#) Las Cruces, NM (9/18), [KFVE-TV Honolulu](#) Honolulu (9/18), and [KTLA-TV Los Angeles](#) Los Angeles (9/18).

4 US Monuments To Be Scaled Back Hold Artifacts, Key Habitat. The [AP](#) (9/18, McCOMBS) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's "recommendation to shrink four sprawling national monuments in the U.S. West jeopardizes protections for ancient cliff dwellings, scenic canyons and habitat for endangered fish and threatened Mojave desert tortoises." The affected monuments include Utah's Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante, along with Nevada's Gold Butte and Oregon's Cascade-Siskiyou.

Leaked Memo: Zinke Wants Smaller Monuments, But How Small? The [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (9/19, Maffly) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke "clearly has his sights on trimming national monuments in southern Utah, but his official report to President Donald Trump is so short on specifics it remains unclear where any 'revised' boundaries to Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante would fall." Zinke's "call for a smaller Bears Ears is not sitting well with the Navajo Nation, one of five tribes that proposed the monument." According to Navajo Nation Attorney General Ethel Branch, "that recommendation – along with Zinke's request that Congress make other conservation designations – contradict all the input provided by the tribe."

Also reporting are [KSL-TV Salt Lake City](#) Salt Lake City (9/18, O'Donoghue), [KSTU-TV Salt Lake City](#) Salt Lake City (9/18, Edwards), and [KTVX-TV Salt Lake City](#) Salt Lake City (9/18).

Applause, Criticism Greet Leak Of Zinke's Monument Recommendations. The [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#) (9/18, Martin, Brean) reports that the Gold Butte recommendation was "applauded by Republicans and denounced by Democrats." Sen. Dean Heller, said the designation is "an example of extreme overreach and the failed Washington-knows-best mentality." Rep. Dina Titus said: "Secretary Zinke leaked a memo in the middle of the night because he knows his plan to hack away at monuments like Gold Butte is an overreach opposed by the majority of Americans."

The [AP](#) (9/18, Ritter) reports that the leaked memo brought "a measured cheer from the head of a southern Nevada water district with springs in the area." Kevin Brown, general manager of the Virgin Valley Water District, "said Monday that the boundary change his agency sought from Zinke covers about 25 square miles (65 square kilometers) in the Virgin Mountains."

Also reporting are the [St. George \(UT\) Spectrum](#) (9/18, Thomas), [KSNV-TV Las Vegas](#) Las Vegas (9/18, Rosch), and [KTNV-TV Las Vegas](#) Las Vegas (9/18).

Zinke Recommendation To Cut Cascade-Siskiyou Questioned. The [AP](#) (9/18, Selsky) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's proposal "recommending downsizing the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument has several errors, one of the people who was behind the creation of the monument said Monday." A memo "justifying his recommendation that the boundaries of the monument, which lies mostly in Oregon and crosses over into California, be 'revised' says motor vehicles aren't allowed in it." Dave Willis, the chairman of the Soda Mountain Wilderness Council, asked, "There are hundreds of roads inside this monument. I live on private land inside the monument. Do we walk or ride horses?"

Also reporting are the [Salem \(OR\) Statesman Journal](#) (9/18, Theen), the [Redding \(CA\) Record-Searchlight](#) (9/18, Daly), and [KGW-TV Portland \(OR\)](#) Portland, OR (9/18, Roth).

No Boundary Changes For New Mexico's 2 National Monuments. The [AP](#) (9/18, Bryan) reports that the recommendations for the Rio Grande del Norte monument and the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks monument "would remain unchanged under recommendations made by U.S. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, providing some relief to the groups that had come out in support of the designations." The recommendations "do call for making public access a priority as well as the pursuit of congressional authority to enable Native American tribes to help manage cultural areas within the boundaries."

The [Las Cruces \(NM\) Sun-News](#) (9/18, Soular) reports that the memo was "met Monday with wide-ranging reactions from Doña Ana County residents and New Mexico's federal lawmakers."

Also reporting are [Santa Fe New Mexican](#) (9/18, Oxford), the [Silver City \(NM\) Sun-News](#) (9/17, Peerman), the [Silver City \(NM\) Sun-News](#) (9/18, Soular), the [Las Cruces \(NM\) Sun-News](#) (9/18), the [Santa Fe \(NM\) Reporter](#) (9/18, Grubs), and [Albuquerque \(NM\) Business First](#) (9/18, Ortiz).

Zinke Would Allow Trees To Be Cut At Katahdin Woods & Waters. The [AP](#) (9/18, Sharp)

reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke "wants to allow trees to be cut on parts of the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument and to ensure that 'traditional uses' like snowmobiling and hunting are taken into account in a management plan that's being drawn up." According to the article, "it was unclear what Zinke meant when he recommended 'active timber management' to promote a healthy forest on the 87,500-acre (35,410-hectare) property." However, "an environmental group said commercial logging would 'almost certainly' trigger a lawsuit." Lisa Pohlmann of the Natural Resources Council of Maine said, "Commercial logging could cause substantial harm to the natural resources protected by the monument and to the economic and recreation benefits already emerging at Katahdin Woods and Waters."

In an editorial, the [Portland \(ME\) Press Herald](#) (9/19) says "that uncertainty is the biggest danger of the destructive and unnecessary process that has been unleashed on the region by the Trump administration and its allies here in Maine." According to the paper, "even people who initially opposed the idea of a federally managed park in the Maine woods were ready to give it a try." However, "with constant political interference, it won't have much of a chance."

Also reporting are the [Boston Globe](#) (9/19, Abel), the [Portland \(ME\) Press Herald](#) (9/18, Miller), and the [Bangor \(ME\) Daily News](#) (9/18, Sambides).

Zinke: Open Up First Atlantic Monument To Commercial Fishing. The [AP](#) (9/18, Whittle) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke recommended opening up the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument to commercial fishing. Zinke's memo "states that instead of prohibiting commercial fishing, the government should allow it in the area under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, which is the primary law governing the U.S.'s marine fisheries and meant to prevent overfishing and guarantee a safe source of seafood." His memo says "that the monument was established 'to protect geologic features, natural resources, and species,' but regulators have charged that it disrupts their ability 'to manage species to balance protection with commercial fishing.'"

Tribune Editorial: Zinke's Report Leaves A Monumental Mess. In an editorial, the [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (9/19) criticizes the draft report for making the "future of those monuments, especially Utah's Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante...even more muddled than it was before." According to the paper, "Zinke's report is so maddeningly vague that it provides the White House with little guidance on just what it should do, and what legal rationale it should offer for doing it." The paper expects that "the path forward now is more confusion, more litigation, more bad blood among neighbors, between Native American Nations and county governments, less time devoted to working up a specific management plan for Bears Ears that might, if everyone approached it in good faith, work out a lot better for everyone than some of us think."

Mormons Are Among The Few Who Want Less Federally Protected Land. Their History Explains Why. In a piece for the [Washington Post](#) (9/18, Colbert), Christine Colbert examines why Mormons are some of the those who are most "opposed to government control of Western lands." According to Colbert, it boils down to "distrust of the federal government" and "distrust of the outside world." She concludes that "until Mormon leaders declare their support for such stewardship and call for the preservation of our nation's greatest treasures, Utah politicians will continue to bend Trump's ear toward privatization and resource development, reflecting their culture's historical distrust and proprietary notions regarding the very lands that really belong to all of us, not just a few."

Trump's Western Firefighters.

In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/18) applauds Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke for issuing a memorandum last week instructing land managers and park superintendents to exercise the "full authority" of their bureaus to clear dying trees and brush in federal lands in order to "proactively work to prevent forest fires." The Journal adds that Congress can help the Administration's efforts to promote better forest management with legislation that reduces litigation against such efforts against fire damage.

Salary Suspicions.

In an op-ed for the [Washington Times](#) (9/18, Feulner), Ed Feulner, president of The Heritage Foundation, praises President Trump for his donation of his salary to National Park Service that will go toward preserving Antietam National Battlefield. Feulner goes on to criticize those who are cynical about Trump's generosity. Feulner concludes: "Instead of huffing that the president is breaking with precedent, how about we pause the partisan rancor for five minutes and thank him for setting a good example?"

Bureau Of Indian Affairs

Relationship Between Trump Admin, Some Montana Tribes Not Yet Defined.

The [KPAX-TV](#) Missoula, MT (9/18, Luetzen) reports that more than 200 days after Ryan Zinke was sworn as Secretary of the Department of Interior, "the relationship between some Native Americans and the new administration is not quite yet defined." Monte Mills, Co-director of Margery Hunter Brown Indian Law Clinic "said the major concerns are the federal trust responsibilities, engagement with tribes across the country, social justice concerns and natural resource issues." Also, "the transfer of management of the National Bison Range to Bureau of Indian Affairs and the protection of Badger Two Medicine for the Blackfeet tribe are just two important issues for local tribes."

Appeals Court Reverses Judge's Decision Allowing Wind Developers To Dig On Osage Land.

The [Tulsa \(OK\) World](#) (9/18, Hinchey) reports that "a U.S. appellate court sided with the Osage Nation in a years-long dispute regarding whether the development of a wind farm on tribal land violated federal mineral regulations." The 10th District Court of Appeals "issued an order Monday reversing a 2015 court ruling that protected the Osage Wind project, which includes 84 turbines spread across about 8,400 acres in Osage County." The Osage Nation has "long opposed the development, arguing that wind farming spoils the prairie's natural beauty and could destroy historic burial sites." The Interior Department "administers the tribe's mineral estate and filed a lawsuit in 2014 to halt extraction work, arguing the act of digging large pits for turbine foundations is considering mining."

MGM Pitches Bridgeport Casino As Feds Delay Tribes' Expansion.

The [Connecticut Mirror](#) (9/18, Pazniokas) reports that MGM Resorts International "launched a glitzy new campaign Monday to expand into Connecticut, an effort that curiously coincides with the Trump administration, at least temporarily, halting the state's two federally recognized tribes' from building a casino in East Windsor to compete with a new MGM resort in Springfield, Mass." MGM, "after telling legislators for two years they would be foolish to approve the tribes' plan without an open competition, now is seeking legislation in special session granting it exclusive rights to build a waterfront casino resort in Bridgeport, a gateway to the lucrative New York City gambling market."

Bureau Of Indian Education

At Havasupai School In Grand Canyon, A Teacher Finds A Failing School.

The [Arizona Republic](#) (9/18) reports on the problems at Havasupai Elementary School that led "nine Havasupai students and their parents to sue the federal government: A school that has failed generations of Havasupai students has resisted reform, refused to offer services for special education or mental health and punished employees who push for change." The federal government has "twice asked a judge to dismiss parts of that lawsuit." U.S. District Judge Steven P. Logan will hear oral arguments in Phoenix on October 24.

Bureau Of Land Management

Lawsuit Aims To Block Oil Drilling On US Land In Nevada.

The [AP](#) (9/18, Sonner) reports environmentalists have sued the BLM "to try to stop it from allowing oil and gas drilling on a vast stretch of federal land in Nevada, where the government is reversing protections put in place nine months ago under the Obama administration." The Sierra Club and Center for Biological Diversity say the BLM "illegally failed to consider potential consequences of hydraulic fracturing, known as fracking, ranging from harm to the greater sage grouse to contamination of fragile desert water sources and emission of climate-altering greenhouse gases."

18 Wild Horses, Burro Tamed At Wyoming Honor Farm Adopted.

The [AP](#) (9/18) reports that "seventeen wild horses and one wild burro have found new homes

after being gentled by inmate trainers at the Wyoming Honor Farm in Riverton." The adoption "continues the effort by the Bureau of Land Management and Honor Farm to place excess wild horses and burros into private care in order to maintain healthy animals on healthy public rangelands."

Officials Examine Boundaries, Public Road Access In American Fork Canyon.

The [Provo \(UT\) Daily Herald](#) (9/18, England) reports that "maps of American Fork Canyon from differing agencies including the U.S. Forest Service, Utah County and the Bureau of Land Management have some accuracy issues" that Mark Allen, founder of Protect and Preserve American Fork Canyon, "would like addressed." Allen was "instrumental in gathering multiple officials from all of those entities on Monday to take a four-wheeling field trip into American Fork Canyon to discuss the boundary concerns, and how government entities can work together to address them."

Bureau Of Ocean Energy Management

Stop Seismic Testing Off NC Coast.

In an editorial, the [Raleigh \(NC\) News & Observer](#) (9/18) opposes seismic testing in the Atlantic Ocean. It raises concerns that "the testing, and the drilling should exploration proceed, could put coastal marine life in danger." It also points out that "the truly ludicrous thing about the argument for exploration" is that "oil prices are depressed (excluding the post-hurricane situation) and there are plenty of reserves."

Bureau Of Reclamation

Will The Southland Wind Up Holding Much Of The \$17-billion Bill For The Delta Water Tunnels?

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (9/18, Boxall) reports that some of California's "biggest water districts" are "expected to decide if they want to sign on to California WaterFix — a long-planned proposal to construct two massive tunnels that would change the way water supplies move through the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta." Supporters have "long have operated under the assumption that the cost, now estimated at nearly \$17 billion, would be split among customers of the big government water projects according to the size of their contracts for delta supplies." According to the article, "under that scenario, the largely urban agencies supplied by the State Water Project would pick up 55% of the tunnel tab, and the largely agricultural districts supplied by the federal Central Valley Project would pay for 45%." However, "as the votes approach, there are growing doubts that agriculture will agree to pay that much."

The [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (9/18, Kasler, Saballow) reports that "some Sacramento-area water agencies would end up paying for a small share of the Delta tunnels under a last-minute alternative funding plan pitched by one of the state's largest farming groups." Westlands Water District, "whose board of directors is scheduled to vote Tuesday on whether to help pay for the tunnels, says it needs to spread the costs among a greater number of water districts, both north and south of the Delta, to make the project affordable to the Fresno and Kings county farmers who get water from Westlands."

Outreach Planned For Upper Deschutes Basin Study.

The [Salem \(OR\) Capital Press](#) (9/18, Perkowski) reports that "federal authorities will soon be sharing preliminary findings of a water study of Oregon's Upper Deschutes Basin with landowners and other affected parties." The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and "regional partners will use the input to complete their analysis of water management in the basin, whose water supply demands are eventually expected to exceed supplies by 230,000 acre-feet a year."

Fish And Wildlife Service

Upper Deschutes River Flooding Continues To Be A Problem.

The [AP](#) (9/18) reports that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and "other groups are working with the irrigation districts to develop plans that will help them stay in business while still finding a

way to address the Upper Deschutes River's flooding issues." The FWS' habitat conversation plan "should be finalized by 2019, said Bridget Moran, the head of department's Bend field office."

County In Illinois To Use Grant To Aid Endangered Bumblebee.

The [AP](#) (9/18) reports that "a northern Illinois county will use a \$5,500 grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to restore a habitat for an endangered bumble bee." The rusty patched bumblebee is "one of 10 bumblebee species found in Winnebago County." The Forest Preserves of Winnebago County will "use the grant to create an ideal habitat for the bumblebee by restoring 15 acres of Kieselburg Forest Preserve in Machesney Park with prairie grass and wildflowers."

Flock Of Endangered Birds Grows Again.

The [Victoria \(TX\) Advocate](#) (9/18, Priest) reports that "an estimated 431 endangered whooping cranes spent last winter on the Texas coast." The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologists "released the much anticipated total on Monday after analyzing aerial surveys done over about 153,950 acres." The article notes that "this is the fifth year in a row that the only naturally occurring flock of whooping cranes has increased in size."

Additional Coverage: Seismic Work In ANWR: Can They Do That?

Additional coverage that the Interior Department is "trying to let industry into the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, to conduct seismic exploration on the coastal plain" was provided by the [Alaska Public Radio Network](#) (9/18, Ruskin) and the [Washington Post](#) (9/18).

Protection For Endangered Species Is Under Attack In Congress.

In an op-ed for the [Bangor \(ME\) Daily News](#) (9/18, Thompson), Sam Thompson, who formerly worked on nuclear arms control and nuclear power issues at the Energy and State Departments, warns that the Endangered Species Act, "our nation's most important and successful wildlife conservation law," is "under attack in Congress." Thompson says that "the beauty" of the act, "in addition to being based on science, is that it creates strong partnerships between the states and federal government." He adds that "it would be a huge mistake to weaken the Endangered Species Act, especially at a time when its importance is actually increasing because of the growing threat from climate change."

National Park Service

Rep. Speier's Amendment Takes Bite At GGNRA Dog-walking Rules.

The [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (9/18, Johnson) reports that "nine months after the Golden Gate National Recreation Area approved final rules restricting off-leash dog walking on much of its turf, the policy has been thrown for another loop." An amendment proposed by Rep. Jackie Speier would prevent the National Park Service "from restricting canine access to its parklands by prohibiting some funding from being used to 'finalize, implement, administer or enforce' the dog management plan." It passed the House last week with bipartisan support.

New Apartments Cater To Bryce Canyon National Park Workforce.

The [AP](#) (9/18) reports that "a new employee housing building for workers in the Bryce Canyon National Park area has opened after years of struggling to find a place to stay during their seasonal jobs." The new Bryce Rim Apartments were constructed by Ruby's Inn, "a historic hotel near the national park that employs 600 workers during the peak season." According to the article, "the apartment offers 24 single employee dorms rooms and two- and three-bedroom units for families."

Grizzly Bear Research Trapping Begins Tomorrow In Grand Teton Park.

[East Idaho News](#) (9/18) reports that "biologists with the Interagency Grizzly Bear Study Team will conduct grizzly bear research and trapping operations within Grand Teton National Park Tuesday, September 19 through November 15." The research is "part of on-going efforts required under the 2016 Conservation Strategy for the Grizzly Bear in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem to monitor the population of grizzly bears."

Students Volunteers Help Maintain Carlsbad Cavern Trails.

The [Carlsbad \(NM\) Current-Argus](#) (9/18) reports that Carlsbad Caverns National Park will "host a

group of five college students who are volunteering their time with the Student Conservation Association (SCA)." The students will "help to improve several park trails over the next three months." The group will "work on Yucca and Juniper Ridge trails as well as park trails in Rattlesnake and Slaughter Canyons."

Additional coverage was provided by the [AP](#) (9/19).

Utah Baby Dies From Head Injury In Arizona Boating Accident.

The [AP](#) (9/18) reports that "authorities say a Utah child has died from a head injury after a boating accident near Navajo Canyon." Glen Canyon National Recreation Area officials "say the accident occurred Sunday evening when a houseboat was trying to dock on a beach about 12 miles from Antelope Point Marina."

Additional Coverage: Legislation Introduced To Remove Robert E. Lee Statue From Antietam National Battlefield.

Additional coverage that legislation has been introduced "to have a statue of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee removed from Antietam National Battlefield" was provided by the [Hagerstown \(MD\) Herald-Mail Media](#) (9/18, Dearth) and [Stars And Stripes](#) (9/17, REID).

Additional Coverage: Magnificent Many Glacier.

Additional coverage that Glacier National Park has completed the renovation of historic Many Glacier Hotel was provided by the [Flathead \(MT\) Beacon](#) (9/18, Franz).

Additional Coverage: Aggressive Bear Euthanized In YNP.

Additional coverage that National Park Service officials "captured and killed a nuisance bear recently in Yellowstone National Park because of its continuing bad habits of intruding on and threatening to interfere with people" was provided by the [Cody \(WY\) Enterprise](#) (9/18, Freedman).

Office Of Insular Affairs

Domenech Confirmed As Assistant Secretary For Insular Areas.

The [Saipan \(MNP\) Tribune](#) (9/18) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke has "applauded the Senate's confirmation of Interior Department veteran Douglas William Domenech as assistant secretary of the Interior for Insular Areas." Domenech was confirmed by the Senate last Friday. Zinke said, "Doug's confirmation could not come soon enough for the people of the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico who are rebuilding in the wake of Hurricane Irma. I'm excited to put him to work for them and all our brothers and sisters across the insular areas."

Irma Recovery Suspended As Maria Menaces Territory.

The [Virgin Islands Daily News](#) (9/18, O'CONNOR) reports that Gov. Kenneth Mapp has "suspended Hurricane Irma recovery efforts with the grim expectation that Hurricane Maria could strike the V.I. on Tuesday." In a radio address from St. Croix Government House on Sunday, Mapp said, "The government has ceased recover operations and we are in hunker down and take shelter mode."

Hurricane Maria Forecast To Strike Puerto Rico Wednesday.

In its lead story, [ABC World News Tonight](#) (9/18, lead story, 2:15, Muir) reported Hurricane Maria strengthened to a Category 4 on Monday as it "bear[s] down on some of the [Caribbean] islands, just now recovering from Irma." In its lead story, [NBC Nightly News](#) (9/18, lead story, 2:45, Holt) reported Maria is "making a beeline towards some of the same Caribbean islands decimated less than two weeks ago by Irma, lashing the Caribbean island of Martinique, [and] barreling towards Puerto Rico."

The [Naples \(FL\) Daily News](#) (9/18, Mangrum) says that according to an advisory from the National Hurricane Center, "additional strengthening is forecast during the next 24 to 36 hours, and Maria is expected to be an extremely dangerous major hurricane during the next couple of days." The [New York Times](#) (9/18, Ahmed, Semple) says the National Hurricane Center called Maria "a potentially catastrophic Category 5 hurricane." Some islands in the storm's path, "still reeling from the impact of Hurricane Irma were bracing late Monday for Round 2, closing schools, stores and just about everything else before the storm made landfall."

Al Roker said on [NBC Nightly News](#) (9/18, story 2, 1:05, Holt) that Maria will "come through Antilles, then the Virgin Islands" before it hits Puerto Rico and "continu[es] on into the Turks and Caicos with more strong storms, Category 4, 130-mile-per-hour winds, a devastating storm surge." In its lead story, the [CBS Evening News](#) (9/18, lead story, 1:45, Mason) reported that "preparations should be under way for a very destructive storm in Puerto Rico, as well as parts of the Virgin Islands. After that, we track it through the Bahamas and off the eastern seaboard by Sunday." [ABC World News Tonight](#) (9/18, story 3, 2:00, Muir) reported residents in the Caribbean are in a "desperate race to prepare" by clearing the debris "left behind by Irma."

[McClatchy](#) (9/18, Whitefield, Charles) says the current forecast track takes Maria "into the Leeward Islands Monday, over the extreme northeastern Caribbean Tuesday," and [Bloomberg News](#) (9/18, Sullivan) reports that on its current track, Maria will "strike Puerto Rico's southern coast Wednesday with winds as high as 150 mph and a storm surge that could reach nine feet." David Begnaud reported on the [CBS Evening News](#) (9/18, story 2, 1:50, Mason) if Maria "makes a direct hit" on Puerto Rico, "it could cut power to this island for weeks. Already tonight, officials have ordered food rationing of basic items like water, milk, baby formula, even flashlights and batteries." The [Miami Herald](#) (9/18, Charles, Staletovich) says it is currently unclear "what threat Maria poses to Florida or the US coast, although a landfall looks unlikely."

White House: Trump, Xi Agree To Step Up Pressure On North Korea.

The [Washington Times](#) (9/18, Miller) reports the White House said President Trump spoke with Chinese President Xi Jinping in a phone call on Monday. In a statement, the White House said Trump and Xi "committed to maximizing pressure on North Korea through vigorous enforcement of United Nations Security Council resolutions." China's Xinhua News Agency reported the two leaders also discussed Trump's upcoming visit to the nation, which [Reuters](#) (9/18) says will likely take place in November, when Trump travels to the Philippines for the ASEAN summit and Vietnam for the APEC summit. Xinhua added, "Xi said China and the United States share extensive common interests and have seen sound momentum of exchanges and cooperation in various areas at present," and that Xi "said he is happy to maintain communications with the U.S. leader on a regular basis over topics of mutual concern."

Mattis Discusses Possible Responses To North Korean Nuclear Threat. The [Washington Post](#) (9/18, Lamothe) reports Defense Secretary Mattis told reporters at the Pentagon on Monday that he and South Korean Defense Minister Song Young-moo "discussed the option" of reintroducing tactical nuclear weapons in South Korea. Mattis did not indicate whether he will support the proposal, but Song has backed the move as an "alternative worth a full review." The Post says that if the US and South Korea move forward with the option, it "could take tensions with North Korea to a new high."

The [AP](#) (9/18, Burns) reports Mattis also told reporters that the US does not believe that North Korean missiles that are test-fired in Japan's direction need to be shot down. Mattis explained that Pyongyang is "intentionally doing provocations that seem to press against the envelope for just how far can they push without going over some kind of a line, in their minds, that would make them vulnerable," so they are aiming "for the middle of the Pacific Ocean." Mattis stressed, however, that if the missiles were deemed a threat to either the US or Japan, then they "would elicit a different response from us."

The [New York Times](#) (9/18, Cooper) reports Mattis "also said he believed that the United States had found military options to handle the nuclear crisis on the Korean Peninsula that would not put the South Korean capital, Seoul, at grave risk, though he refused to elaborate on what those might be." Military experts suggested that potential options against North Korea "that might not prompt immediate retaliation against Seoul could include cyberwarfare or even an assassination attempt on Mr. Kim – though such an attempt would have to be successful." The Times adds that signs of possible US military action in North Korea, such as the "repositioning of military assets or an evacuation of American citizens in the region," have thus far "not appeared."

US, South Korean Militaries Conduct Joint Exercises In "Show Of Force" To North Korea. The [Washington Post](#) (9/18, Lamothe) reports that on Sunday, the Pentagon dispatched "a formation of 14 bombers and fighters over the Korean Peninsula on Sunday that also included South Korean and Japanese aircraft, the latest show of force in response to North Korea's missile launches and nuclear tests." The Post says that the show of military force "came as President Trump prepared to deliver remarks for the first time this week at the United Nations General Assembly" amid escalating tensions over the North Korean crisis. In a Sunday appearance on CNN, Ambassador Haley told CNN, "If North Korea keeps on with this reckless behavior, if the United States has to defend itself or defend its allies in any way, North Korea will be destroyed," although "none of us

want that."

In response to Haley's remarks, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang stressed that all parties must enforce the latest round of UN resolutions on North Korea instead of "deliberately complicating the issue," [Reuters](#) (9/18, Blanchard, Shin) reports. Lu added that military threats are "not beneficial to a final resolution to the peninsula nuclear issue." On Monday, North Korea's foreign ministry called the latest UN resolution "the most vicious, unethical and inhumane act of hostility to physically exterminate" its citizens, government, and system. It warned that the "increased moves" by the US and its allies "to impose sanctions and pressure... will only increase our pace toward the ultimate completion of the state nuclear force." Reuters notes that as the US and its allies conducted staged bombing drills, China and Russia launched naval military exercises off Russia's far eastern port of Vladivostok, located near the Russia-North Korea border.

Spain Orders Expulsion Of North Korean Ambassador. The [Washington Post](#) (9/18, Fifield) reports the Spanish Foreign Ministry announced that it has ordered North Korea's ambassador to Madrid, Kim Hyok Chol, to leave the country by the end of the month. Mexico, Peru, and Kuwait have ordered similar expulsions. The Post says that Spain's expulsion of Kim "will please Trump administration officials, who have been asking countries with diplomatic relations with North Korea to scale them back as a way to further isolate Kim Jong Un's regime."

US Geological Survey

USGS May Look At The Entire Williston Basin For A New Oil Estimate.

The [Prairie Public News \(ND\)](#) (9/18, Thompson) reports that Sen. John Hoeven and others recently asked US Geological Survey for an updated assessment of the oil in the Bakken and Three Forks formations. State mineral resources director Lynn Helms "said USGS is now talking about a full Williston Basin-wide assessment in a few years." But "there's been no official word from USGS."

Additonal Reading.

- *Conservatives And Conservationists Find Common Ground On Chesapeake Shores.* [Christian Science Monitor](#) (9/18, Hinckley).
- *A 50-year Effort To Raise Endangered Whooping Cranes Comes To An End.* [Washington Post](#) (9/18, Brulliard).
- *U.S. And Canadian Tribes Gather In Yellowstone To Advocate Name Changes.* [Montana Public Radio](#) (9/18, Hegyi).
- *Tribes Want Some Name Changes In Yellowstone National Park.* [KRTV-TV](#) Great Falls, MT (9/18, Davies).

Top National News

Trump Pledges To Support UN, But Calls For Reforms.

Reports on President Trump's call for reforms at the UN on Monday highlight his history of criticism of the world body. Media outlets, however, say his tone Monday was more restrained than his rhetoric on the campaign trail. Several reports also make note that his remarks lasted just four minutes. All three networks covered the President's address, dedicating a total of just under six minutes of combined airtime. In the briefest of the three reports, the [CBS Evening News](#) (9/18, story 4, 0:30, Mason) called Monday's speech "something of a warm-up" to his address before the General Assembly on Tuesday. On [ABC World News Tonight](#) (9/18, story 4, 2:45, Muir), Jonathan Karl said Trump "made his UN debut today, declaring he wants to make the United Nations great," but "not long ago, he was one of the UN's harshest critics."

John Roberts reported on [Fox News' Special Report](#) (9/18) that Trump was "less strident in his language, but no less forceful in his call to change the culture at the UN." Jeff Zeleny too said on [CNN's The Lead](#) (9/18) that Trump's "words today [were] far more measured than the campaign trail," and the [Los Angeles Times](#) (9/18, Wilkinson, Bierman) says he was "acting more the statesman than the flamethrower."

Mara Liasson said on [Fox News' Special Report](#) (9/18), "This was a real contrast. Remember during the campaign he said the United Nations was an enemy of freedom and an enemy of democracy? Now he's saying more or less what a lot of American presidents have said

is that it is a good thing to reform the bureaucracy there and talking about not having the US pay a disproportionate share, which is something that other presidents have said. This was a pretty typical first day for an American president so far."

Mollie Hemingway of The Federalist said on [Fox News' Special Report](#) (9/18), "The tone is markedly different from how it was during the campaign. It kind of actually a disappointing change in rhetoric. He said today that the UN does a good job feeding the hungry and taking care of disaster. That's actually not true. It's a bloated organization."

However, in his opening monologue on [Fox News' Hannity](#) (9/18), Sean Hannity said Trump "wasted little time in calling out the organization's many, many failures." Hannity added that it was "really refreshing for an American President to call out the UN because for years, we've seen the organization repeatedly attack Israel and push their radical leftist, globalist agenda that does not respect the sovereignty of individual countries, including the US."

The [AP](#) (9/18, Lemire, Superville) says Trump "used his United Nations debut on Monday to prod the international organization to cut its bloated bureaucracy and sharpen its ill-defined mission." At the same time, Trump also "pledged US support for the world body he had excoriated as a candidate, and his criticisms were more restrained than in years past." The AP says that even as Trump "chastised" the UN, he pledged that the US would be "be partners in your work" to make the organization more effective. The [New York Daily News](#) (9/18, Silverstein) likewise says the President "gave no indication that he will weaken the US support" for the world body.

[USA Today](#) (9/18, Jackson) reports that a Monday's special forum, Trump, "a long-time critic of the UN," said the body has not reached its full potential "because of bureaucracy and mismanagement." USA Today says that "as he did on the campaign trail," Trump stressed that "no member state shoulders a disproportionate share of the burden."

The [New York Times](#) (9/18, Baker, Sengupta) says Trump opened his visit to the UN "with a polite but firm call" for the world body "to overhaul itself, as world leaders waited to see how he would reconcile his 'America first' vision with an institution devoted to collective action and global goals." The Times notes that his address "lasted only four minutes and included none of the bombast he had directed at foreign institutions in the past."

[NBC Nightly News](#) (9/18, story 3, 2:30, Holt) said the President put "a new twist on his old campaign slogan." Trump was shown saying: "I think the main message is make the United Nations great. Not again. Make the United Nations great." The [Washington Post](#) (9/18, Nakamura) similarly says that Trump, "speaking briefly with reporters...rifled off of his campaign slogan, Make America Great Again." The [Washington Times](#) (9/18, Boyer) quotes the President as saying in his address, "The United Nations was founded on truly noble goals. Yet in recent years the United Nations has not reached its full potential because of bureaucracy and mismanagement."

The [Washington Free Beacon](#) (9/18, Heretik) reports Trump "praised many of the organization's goals and past actions, but said institutional change is needed," and [CNN](#) (9/18, Diamond) reports on its website that he called for the UN to take steps to "protect whistleblowers," despite his "frequent heavy-handed criticism of the leaks that have beset his administration."

[Newsday](#) (9/18, Dowdy) says the President "delivered a short speech," and [Reuters](#) (9/18, Holland) reports that "in a building where long statements are commonplace, Trump spoke for just four minutes" to the forum, which "more than 120 countries were invited to attend" after signing on to "a US-drafted 10-point political declaration" backing UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' reform efforts.

[Politico](#) (9/18, Toosi) says the issue of UN reform is "likely to please his domestic political base," and while Trump is "hardly the first US president to call for shaking up" the UN, he is "fortunate in that the still-new" Guterres has made reform "a top priority, raising the odds that some genuine changes are on the way."

[Newsweek](#) (9/18, Lanktree) examines Trump's remarks in the past criticizing the world body, writing that "from 2011 onward, he started making the creed that has become his most frequent: calling for the organization to have its funding cut."

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (9/18, story 4, 2:45, Muir) reported that "amid a flurry of meetings" on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly on Monday, the President "no public mention...of the biggest issue on the agenda this week: North Korea." However, ABC said there is "no doubt" North Korea will come up in Trump's speech on Tuesday. ABC's Jonathan Karl said, "You are going to hear a very tough line from the President on North Korea."

Greg Palkot reported on [Fox News' Special Report](#) (9/18) that the need to reign in the

North will be at the top of Trump's agenda this week. Trump, South Korean President Moon Jae-In, and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe will meet Thursday.

Media Analyses: "National Sovereignty" To Be Theme Of Trump's UNGA Address. The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/18, Fassihi, Stokols) reports that during his address to the General Assembly Tuesday, President Trump will lay out a foreign policy rooted in his view of national sovereignty and anchored by "America First" principles, according to a senior Administration official. "It will be a foreign policy that is driven by outcomes, not by ideologies," the senior Administration official told reporters. "What the president is doing is explaining how the principle of America First is not only consistent with the goal of international cooperation, but a rational basis for every country to engage in cooperation."

The [Washington Post](#) (9/18, Nakamura, Gearan) says the President's "nationalist agenda has led to widespread anxiety among the US allies and partners who have gathered" at the UN this week. Amid "mounting global challenges, foreign leaders are carefully watching Trump's moment on the world stage for signals about his willingness to maintain the United States' traditional leadership role."

Counselor to the President Kellyanne Conway, asked on [Fox News' Fox & Friends](#) (9/18) what the President's message will be, said, "President Trump will be promoting peace. He'll be promoting prosperity and sovereignty and accountability."

A [Washington Examiner](#) (9/18) editorial writes that "national sovereignty" is "not a popular notion among those American and European elites who hang out at the United Nations," but "will be a theme of President Trump's address to the UN General Assembly on Tuesday." The Examiner says that "by emphasizing sovereignty in a setting where it is more commonly eroded, Trump is doing what he does best; bluntly repudiating the most fashionable idea of the people around him," and he "is right to do so."

Trump Also Expected To Emphasize North Korean Threat. A "senior White House official" told the [Washington Times](#) (9/18, Boyer, Miller) that Trump, in "his first address to the United Nations General Assembly" on Tuesday, "will turn up the heat on North Korea and call out countries that coddle the rogue regime." On condition of anonymity, the official said the President "will speak in extremely tough terms about the North Korean menace, and the threat it poses to our security and the security of all the nations in that room." He will also "talk about as well the enablement of the North Korean regime and what that means, too." The Times says that Trump's "remarks will be aimed directly at China and Russia, the biggest sponsors and protectors of Kim Jong-un's hermit kingdom, although those two nations won't have representatives at the gathering in New York."

Citing a White House aide, [USA Today](#) (9/19, Jackson) reports Trump is also expected to "argue nations can find opportunities to work together on shared threats, in particular, those from North Korea" as well as Iran. Nonetheless, Trump is also expected to "promote the idea that each country should respond to its own needs – and the needs of its citizens – above all others," a position dubbed "principled realism." The aide added that Trump favors fostering global stability over nation-building or spreading democracy, which the aide said is "accomplished through countries that are more secure, countries that are more prosperous, and countries that are more sovereign."

Gerald F. Seib, in his column for the [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/18, Seib), examines potential diplomatic strategies that the international community can employ to dissuade North Korea from pursuing its goal of nuclear weapons and missile programs, and says the success of these approaches may hinge on what Kim Jong-un ultimately wants to achieve. Seib adds that a long-term strategy of containment remains an option if diplomatic approaches fail to reverse North Korea's nuclear program; while expensive and frightening, he says, such an approach is still preferable to the threat of war on the Korean Peninsula.

Media Analyses: As Graham-Cassidy Gains Momentum, Democrats Look To Run Out The Clock.

Reports say that Affordable Care Act repeal-and-replace legislation proposed by Sens. Lindsey Graham and Bill Cassidy gained momentum on Monday as Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey said he backs the bill – an important endorsement, since Sen. John McCain, who cast the deciding vote against the last GOP attempt at ACA repeal, has said that Ducey's position would be important in his determining how he would vote. But in order for the measure to advance with 51 votes (or 50 and a tie-breaker by Vice President Pence) under the reconciliation process, the bill must pass by September 30, so as [Politico](#) (9/18, Caygle) reports, Democratic leaders are pressing for a full Congressional Budget Office analysis of the bill, which would take time. [USA Today](#) (9/18, Collins)

reports that a spokesman for Senate Majority Leader McConnell said that the CBO has been asked "to produce an expedited analysis" of the bill – though [The Hill](#) (9/18, Carney) reports that Democrats have other "delaying tactics at their disposal."

The [New York Times](#) (9/18, A1, Pear) reports that "a last-ditch push to obliterate" the ACA "could be nearing a showdown vote in the Senate, and a handful of Republicans insist they are closing in on the votes." Graham and Cassidy "say their drive is gaining momentum." The Times says the bill is "still a long shot," though most other sources disagree. [Politico](#) (9/18, Everett, Haberkorn) reports under the headline "Momentum Builds For Obamacare Repeal" that the "last-gasp Obamacare repeal effort is gaining steam," and Perry Bacon Jr. of [FiveThirtyEight](#) (9/18) writes that 41 senators are "almost certain to vote yes," and five more are "likely" to back the legislation. Bacon says the bill could pass, since McCain is an "extremely close friend" of Graham's. Bacon writes, "I have some doubt that McCain would vote down a bill that Graham has advocated so strongly for." And Ducey's backing "could also move the Arizona senator towards supporting it."

[The Hill](#) (9/18, Sullivan) calls Ducey's support "a crucial boost for [the bill's] chances." Ducey said Monday, "Congress has 12 days to say 'yes' to Graham-Cassidy. It's time for them to get the job done." McCain "has said that Ducey's position would be an important factor in how he votes." The [Washington Times](#) (9/18, Howell) reports that Graham "took Mr. Ducey's support and ran with it," saying, "With Gov. Ducey's support, we are gaining the momentum we need to repeal and replace Obamacare. Gov. Ducey rightly believes he can do a better job delivering healthcare to Arizonans than some nameless, faceless bureaucrat in Washington." In response to Ducey's announcement, Graham [tweeted](#), "Great day for federalism, bad day for Obamacare."

The [Washington Post](#) (9/18, Cunningham) says that the "political prospects for the bill...seemed to be improving by the hour Monday." In addition to Ducey's backing, "some moderate senators whose votes are crucial have either signed onto the bill or at least haven't ruled it out yet." However, [McClatchy](#) (9/18, Dumain) reports that Gov. Henry McMaster of Graham's home state of South Carolina has yet to sign on.

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (9/18, Levey) says the "last-ditch Republican push...appeared to pick up momentum" with Ducey's support. Graham-Cassidy "would go far beyond repealing key parts of President Obama's signature healthcare law. It would fundamentally change how states and the federal government divide the cost of providing healthcare." It would "give states broad new authority to completely overhaul their healthcare systems," and "redistribute tens of billions in federal aid." The [New York Times](#) (9/18) says the bill "would also make permanent, structural changes to the Medicaid program for beneficiaries who qualified before the expansion, converting it from an open-ended federal health care program to one that caps federal spending on each beneficiary."

Johnson Says Homeland Security And Governmental Affairs Committee Will Hold Hearing. The [Washington Post](#) (9/18, Weigel) reports that though the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee would be the most likely venue for a hearing on the bill, Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Chairman Ron Johnson plans to hold a hearing in his committee. The Post writes that though "it's not unusual for this committee to hold hearings on government spending and best practices," it is "not, nor has it ever been, one of the committees that health insurance legislation has had to move through." The hearing "strikes opponents of the legislation as an attempt to check a box and say the bill has been vetted," and McCain has said that the Senate HELP Committee should be the venue. The [Washington Times](#) (9/18, Howell) says Johnson's move is "viewed as a table-setter for a potential vote on the last-gasp Obamacare repeal bill."

Meadows Says House Would Pass Bill; Tea Party Patriots Lends Support. [Politico](#) (9/18, Bade) reports that Rep. Mark Meadows (R-NC), who leads the House Freedom Caucus, "predicted Monday that the House would pass a last-ditch effort to repeal Obamacare if it clears the Senate, with conservatives getting on board." [Breitbart](#) (9/18, Moran) reports, "The Tea Party Patriots joined the Family Research Council and the Susan B. Anthony List to endorse" the measure, but said that once passed, the House could improve the measure by repealing "regulations such as community ratings and essential benefits."

Conway Says Trump Would Sign "Meaningful Repeal And Replace Legislation." Kellyanne Conway said on [Fox News' Fox & Friends](#) (9/18) that another healthcare vote "could happen" before the end of September. Conway added that "the Graham-Cassidy bill is gaining in support and steam. Many of the governors like it. I'm told we're close to 50 votes or so in the Senate. ... [President Trump] is ready. You put meaningful repeal and replace legislation on his desk and he will sign it." [Politico](#) (9/18, Nelson) reports on Conway's remarks.

Paul Says He Will Oppose "Fake Repeal" Graham-Cassidy. Sen. Rand Paul writes on the [Fox](#)

[News](#) (9/18, Paul) website, "I must add to the list of ObamaCare Lite plans to oppose the new Graham/Cassidy bill that was introduced last week in the Senate. ... In no way is it repeal the way we promised. I will oppose this bill as I did the other fake repeal bills, and I urge those who want repeal to do so, as well."

House Democrats Tweet Opposition. As was the case when previous Senate GOP repeal-and-replace bills were under consideration, many House Democrats took to Twitter to express their opposition, while their GOP colleagues did not weigh in. Rep. Nanette Barragán (D-CA) [tweeted](#), "#GrahamCassidy is just another terrible #TrumpCare bill that deprives Americans of healthcare." Rep. Brendan Boyle (D-PA) [tweeted](#), "We can't let up and must defeat #GrahamCassidy or millions will suffer." Rep. Joe Crowley (D-NY) [tweeted](#), "Democrats aren't going to stand by as Republicans attempt to sabotage America's health care system." Rep. Diana DeGette (D-CO) [tweeted](#), "Don't be fooled – #GrahamCassidy is not a kinder, gentler repeal of #ACA. It will still rip coverage from at least 15 million Americans." Rep. Raul Grijalva (D-AZ) [tweeted](#), "Don't let @SenateGOP fool you... #GrahamCassidy is every bit as ruthless as previous versions of #TrumpCare." Rep. Joe Kennedy III (D-MA) [tweeted](#), "Old enough to remember when @SenateGOP promised they wouldn't take health care away from a sick child."

Rep. Ruben Kihuen (D-NV) [tweeted](#), "Nevadans desperately need common-sense solutions that will expand access, keep healthcare costs low & stabilize markets. NOT #GrahamCassidy." Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) [tweeted](#), "#GrahamCassidy bill is just the latest version of #Trumpcare. Still just as bad & endangers care. We must still fight to #ProtectOurCare." Rep. Frank Pallone (D-NJ) [tweeted](#), "#GrahamCassidy= #Trumpcare. Will cost NJ more \$ & leave more uninsured." Rep. Kathleen Rice (D-NY) [tweeted](#), "Tired of 'repeal & replace?' GOP is back at it again. Speak up & help defeat it – again." Rep. Tim Walz (D-MN) [tweeted](#), "I implore @SenateMajLdr & @SenateGOP to heed calls from within their own party for regular order and bipartisanship. Abandon #GrahamCassidy." Rep. Nydia Velazquez (D-NY) [tweeted](#), "The GOP can't seem to get the message. New #TrumpCare called #GrahamCassidy is another heartless attempt to take away care from millions."

Obama-Era CMS Chief: GOP "Putting All Eggs In Graham Cassidy." Former Acting Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Andy Slavitt [tweeted](#), "Republican leadership now putting all eggs in Graham Cassidy. Word is no bipartisan deal and no waivers. Strong arm calls tonight."

Blumstein: Clarification Legislation Could Lead SCOTUS To Kill ACA. James Blumstein of the Vanderbilt University Health Policy Center writes in the [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/18) that Republicans could kill the ACA by passing legislation stating that Congress did not intend to use its taxation power to enforce the individual mandate. Since Chief Justice Roberts' deciding vote in upholding the ACA in 2012 was based on congressional taxation authority, Blumstein asserts, such a clarification could lead the Supreme Court to rule the ACA unconstitutional.

Republicans Eye Mortgage Interest, State And Local Tax Deductions To Pay For Tax Cuts.

The [AP](#) (9/18, Gordon) reports that as Republicans search for "about \$1 trillion to finance sweeping tax cuts," they are focusing on "two popular deductions that are woven into the nation's fiscal fabric – the mortgage interest deduction that millions of homeowners prize and the deduction for state and local taxes popular in Democratic strongholds." According to "congressional aides and strong hints from some lawmakers," those deductions "are in the cross-hairs as Republicans look to slash the corporate and individual tax rates."

WPost Gives Ryan's Tax Reform Claims "Two Pinocchios." An analysis in the [Washington Post](#)'s (9/18, Lewis) "Fact Checker" column reports that as he tries to build support "for a major overhaul of what he calls the United States' 'terrible tax system,'" House Speaker Ryan "sat down with the Associated Press to [discuss](#) his agenda." Ryan, the Post adds, "is very adept at citing what appear to be authoritative facts and figures." However, "Ryan's facts sometimes require careful scrutiny." The Post goes on to analyze Ryan's arguments and gives his claims "Two Pinocchios."

Cato Analysts Call For Elimination Of Low Income Housing Tax Credit. In an op-ed for the [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/18), Chris Edwards, director of tax policy studies at the Cato Institute, and Vanessa Brown Calder, a housing policy analyst at Cato, make a case for the elimination of the Low Income Housing Tax Credit, arguing that while it purports to be an antipoverty program, developers, investors, and the financial industry are its main beneficiaries.

Editorial Wrap-Up

New York Times.

"The Republican Health Care Zombie Is Back." A [New York Times](#) (9/19, Board) editorial outlines ways that Republican lawmakers' proposed Graham-Cassidy healthcare bill "would in many ways be worse than bills that came before." The Times urges the Senate to "show a little patience," as Sens. Lamar Alexander and Patty Murray are working on "a better, more humane option."

"A Solution To New York City's Gridlock." The [New York Times](#) (9/19, Board) editorializes that the severe traffic generated by the United Nations General Assembly in New York City serves as a reminder "of the need to reduce traffic in the business heart of the city through a redesigned system of tolls known as congestion pricing." While Gov. Andrew Cuomo "has yet to flesh out details of what his plan would look like," the Times says he "correctly sees it as a way to raise gobs of cash for the city's ailing mass-transit network." More importantly, "the true goal of this pricing mechanism is embodied in its name: decongesting streets for the benefit of drivers and pedestrians – and their lungs." The Times concludes in stating that "there's nothing regressive about plowing toll revenue into improvements for mass transit, which is how most low- and middle-income New Yorkers get around."

"The Lingering Damage Of Ferguson's Racism." In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (9/19, Board) says Ferguson, Missouri "agreed to a consent decree requiring it to root out the racist and unconstitutional practices that Justice officials documented in a hair-raising report two years ago" following the fatal shooting of "an African-American teenager named Michael Brown" by a white police officer. The Times stresses that Ferguson now "has a further obligation: a moral duty to compensate victims of abusive policing." The Times points to the case of "Fred Watson, an African-American father of two who lost his home, career and peace of mind after he was unjustly arrested five years ago, with the city prosecutor pursuing the charges until dropping them last week." The Times reiterates that Ferguson must not only financially compensate the Watson "family and apologize for this tragedy," but also "consider whether it could truly be complying with the consent order if it continued to hound Mr. Watson for five years."

Washington Post.

"Twenty-Three Children Are Shot Everyday In America." In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (9/18) writes that 23 children were shot each day in the United States in 2015, according to a Post analysis of data from the CDC and the US Consumer Product Safety Commission – a number that "represents a crisis, a serious public-health problem that demands attention." The Post argues that Congress must act to prevent to prevent such violence and reject the national gun lobby.

"The Night One Russian Military Officer May Have Saved The World." In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (9/18) says, "On the night of Sept. 26, 1983, in a period of Cold War tension, Stanislav Petrov, a lieutenant colonel on duty at a missile attack early-warning center south of Moscow, was jolted by an alarm of a U.S. intercontinental ballistic missile attack on the Soviet Union," and he responded by telling "his superiors...that it was a false alarm." The Post says that by doing so, Petrov effectively "prevented a chain of reactions by higher-level officials that could have led to catastrophe," a move that gained him the reputation as "the man who saved the world." The Post posits that Petrov's story "may sound like ancient history," but is worth remembering today because "nuclear-armed missiles in the United States and Russia are still on launch-ready alert." The Post cautions that today's "world, led by the United States and Russia, should find a way to back away from this danger."

"Trump's Immigration Crackdown Hits A Speed Bump." The [Washington Post](#) (9/18) editorializes against San Francisco's opposition to "handing over undocumented immigrants convicted of...violent and serious crimes." The Post attacks liberal localities for turning a "blind eye to undocumented residents who have committed major crimes, imperil public safety and should be removed." However, the Post says the California Values Act signed by Gov. Brown that declares California a sanctuary state "reflects the challenge[s]" that police "face in cultivating strong relations with immigrant communities, without which neither victims nor witnesses will cooperate with them," and the Post urges the Trump Administration to "take note" of this.

Wall Street Journal.

"The Fed's Long March To Normal." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/18) editorializes in favor of the Fed's unwinding of its bond portfolio, saying it could boost the Fed's credibility to return to a modest view of central banking. The Journal praises Fed Chair Janet Yellen for avoiding roiling the markets with anticipation of the move. The editorial highlights concern that as the Fed unloads

long-term bonds, investors may sell riskier assets, adversely impacting some asset classes. However, the Journal also emphasizes market uncertainty over the impact of the wind-down.

"Pelosi Faces Her Constituents." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/18) editorializes that House Minority Leader Pelosi should be commended by immigrants' rights supporters for her role in garnering President Trump's support for Congressional action on DACA. The Journal decries the young protesters for lacking an understanding of US legislative processes.

"Trump's Western Firefighters." In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/18) applauds Interior Secretary Zinke for issuing a memorandum last week instructing land managers and park superintendents to exercise the "full authority" of their bureaus to clear dying trees and brush in federal lands in order to "proactively work to prevent forest fires." The Journal adds that Congress can help the Administration's efforts to promote better forest management with legislation that reduces litigation against such efforts against fire damage.

Big Picture

Headlines From Today's Front Pages.

Wall Street Journal:

[Trump To Push Nationalist Policy At UN](#)
[The Fed, A Decade After The Crisis, Is About To Embark On The Great Unwinding](#)
[Northrop Grumman Move To Acquire Rocket Maker Reflects Military Space Race](#)
[Equifax Work For Government Shows Company's Broad Reach](#)

New York Times:

[With A Picked Lock And A Threatened Indictment, Mueller's Inquiry Sets A Tone](#)
[Obamacare Repeal, Thought Dead In July, May Be Revived In Senate](#)
[Trump Soft-Soaps The UN. Of Course, It Was Only Day 1](#)
[Despite Rising Seas And Bigger Storms, Florida's Land Rush Endures](#)

Washington Post:

[ACA Repeal Effort Is Revived](#)
[Facebook's Openness Questioned On The Hill](#)
[Trump Plans Pragmatic UN Speech](#)
[London Mayor Eyes Tax On Swanky 'Zombie Flats'](#)
[New Head Winds For Texas Students Post-Harvey](#)

Financial Times:

[Vladimir Putin Takes A Close Look At War Games](#)
[Theresa May Moves To Tighten Grip On Brexit Process](#)
[Portuguese Bonds In Biggest Post-crisis Rally After S&P Upgrade](#)

Washington Times:

[Trump To Rail Against North Korea At U.N., Seek United Front Against Nuclear And Missile Programs](#)
[Religious Extremists In Russia Try To Shut Down Movie About Romance Of Czar Nicholas II](#)
[Graham-Cassidy Block-Grant Bill Sets Off Clashes In Senate As Obamacare Repeal Clock Ticks](#)
[Debate Will Offer Northam, Gillespie A Chance For Breakout In Tight Virginia Governor's Race](#)
[Crown Prince's Quick Rise Seen In Purge Of Saudi Clerics](#)

Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:

ABC: Hurricane Tracking; Hurricane Jose-East Coast; Hurricanes-Caribbean; White House-Trump UN Address; St. Louis Protest; Louisiana-Racial Murders; London Terror Attack-Investigation; New York-Tour Bus Crash; Baltimore-Chemical Scare; France-American Students Attacked; National Monuments-Protected Area Reduction; Sean Spicer-Emmy Appearance; Disabled Hiker.

CBS: Hurricane Tracking; Hurricanes-Caribbean; London Terror Attack-Investigation; White House-Trump UN Address; Russia Military Training; Russia Meddling Investigation-Sputnik; San Francisco-Pelosi Protest; Los Angeles-Lead Soil Contamination; Georgia Tech Student Shooting; Tattoo-Possible Risks; Cold War-Averted Nuclear War.

NBC: Hurricanes-Caribbean; Hurricane Tracking; White House-Trump UN Address; Crippled State Department; San Francisco-Pelosi Protest; St. Louis Protest; France-American Students Attacked; London Terror Attack-Investigation; Louisiana State University-Fraternity Hazing Death; New

York-Tour Bus Crash; Toys R Us Bankruptcy; Emmy Awards; Boston Marathon Bombing Survivor.

Network TV At A Glance:

Hurricanes – 13 minutes, 10 seconds

White House-Trump UN Address – 5 minutes, 45 seconds

London Terror Attack-Investigation – 3 minutes, 55 seconds

Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:

ABC: Georgia Tech Student Shooting; Hurricane Tracking; Wisconsin-Foxconn Incentives; Wall Street News.

CBS: Hurricane Tracking; Russia Meddling Investigation-Manafort; White House-Trump UN Address; St. Louis Protest; Georgia Tech Student Shooting.

FOX: Hurricane Tracking; Georgia Tech Student Shooting; St. Louis Protest; White House-Trump UN Address.

NPR: White House-Trump UN Address; US Military Spending Increase; National Monuments-Protected Area Reduction; Wall Street News.

Washington Schedule

Today's Events In Washington.

White House:

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Gives an address to the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly; participates in an expanded meeting with the Amir of Qatar; participates in a photo opportunity with leaders of the United Nations Member State; gives remarks at a diplomatic reception.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Participates in a meeting with High Representative of the European Union Federica Mogherini; participates in a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi of Pakistan; participates in a diplomatic reception hosted by the President.

US Senate: 9:30 AM Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Business Meeting, hearing on vegetation and electricity assets – Business Meeting, with agenda including nominations of Joseph Balash to be Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Land and Minerals Management; Richard Glick and Kevin McIntyre to be Federal Energy Regulatory Commission members; David Jonas to be Department of Energy General Counsel; and Ryan Nelson to be Department of the Interior Solicitor * Immediately followed by hearing to examine the vegetation management requirements for electricity assets located on federal lands, Section 2310 of 'S. 1460, the Energy and Natural Resources Act of 2017', and 'H.R. 1873, the Electricity Reliability and Forest Protection Act', with testimony from National Forest System Associate Deputy Chief Glenn Casamassa; Bureau of Land Management Acting Deputy Director of Operations John Ruhs; Missoula Electric Cooperative General Manager Mark Hayden; The Wilderness Society Senior Regional Director – Southwest Region Scott Miller; and Arizona Public Service Forestry and Special Programs Manager Andrew Rable Location: Rm 366, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://energy.senate.gov/public/>

9:30 AM Senate Agriculture Committee nominations hearing – Nominations hearing considers Stephen Censky to be Deputy Secretary of Agriculture; and Ted McKinney to be Under Secretary of Agriculture for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs Location: Hart Senate Office Building, Rm 216, Washington, DC <http://agriculture.senate.gov/>

10:00 AM Senate Finance Committee hearing on business tax reform – Hearing on 'Business Tax Reform', with testimony from Tax Foundation President Scott Hodge; Urban-Brookings Tax Policy Center Fellow Dr Donald Marron; former American Institute of CPAs Tax Executive Committee Chair Troy Lewis; and The Real Estate Roundtable President and CEO Jeffrey DeBoer Location: Rm 215, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://finance.senate.gov>

10:00 AM Senate HELP Committee nominations hearing – Nominations hearing considers Carlos Muniz to be Department of Education General Counsel; and Janet Dhillon and Dr Daniel Gade to be Equal Employment Opportunity Commission members (with Dhillon to be chair, upon confirmation) Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 430, Washington, DC [http://help.senate.gov/](http://help.senate.gov)

10:00 AM Senate Foreign Relations Committee Business Meeting – Business Meeting, with agenda including legislation including 'H.R. 390, Iraq and Syria Genocide Emergency Relief and Accountability Act of 2017', with an amendment; and 'S. XXXX, Trafficking Victims Protection

Reauthorization Act of 2017'; and the nominations of Barbara Lee and Christopher Smith to be U.S. Representatives to the United Nations General Assembly Seventy-second Session; Steven Mnuchin to be U.S. Governor of the International Monetary Fund, of the African Development Bank, of the Inter-American Development Bank, of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, of the African Development Fund, and of the Asian Development Bank; Doug Manchester to be U.S. Ambassador to the Bahamas; Kathleen Troia McFarland to be U.S. Ambassador to Singapore; and Stephen King to be U.S. Ambassador to the Czech Republic * Immediately followed by nominations hearing Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 419, Washington, DC <http://foreign.senate.gov/>

10:00 AM Senate Foreign Relations Committee nominations hearing – Nominations hearing considers Jon Huntsman to be U.S. Ambassador to Russia; and A. Wess Mitchell to be Assistant Secretary of State for European And Eurasian Affairs * Immediately follows Business Meeting Location: Rm 419, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://foreign.senate.gov/>

10:00 AM Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on recent U.S. Navy incidents at sea (Time Change) – Hearing on 'Recent United States Navy Incidents at Sea', with testimony from Secretary of the Navy Richard Spencer; Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson; and Government Accountability Office Director of Defense Force Structure and Readiness Issues John Pendleton * USS Fitzgerald collided with a container ship near Japan in June, killing seven of its sailors, while the USS John S. McCain hit an oil tanker near Singapore last month, leaving 10 of its sailors dead. Time changed from 9:30a to 10 a. Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm G50, Washington, DC <http://armed-services.senate.gov/>

10:30 AM Independent Sen. Bernie Sanders speaks at Good Jobs Nation 'Midwest Pick Up' Tour closing event – Independent Sen. Bernie Sanders calls on President Donald Trump to keep his campaign promise to 'stop the offshoring of good jobs', on the final stop of Good Jobs Nation's 2017 Midwest Pick Tour. Sen. Sanders is joined by Communications Workers of America President Chris Shelton, UE President Peter Knowlton, retired Steelworkers Local 1999 President Chuck Jones, Good Jobs Nation Director Joseph Geevarghese, and Our Revolution * Sen. Sanders attended the 21 Aug tour kick off rally in Indiana Location: 608 Dirksen. (NEW LOCATION) goodjobsnation.org <https://twitter.com/GoodJobsNation>

10:30 AM Senate Commerce Committee legislative hearing – Legislative hearing on 'S.1693, The Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act of 2017', with testimony from California Attorney General Xavier Becerra; Santa Clara University School of Law Professor Eric Goldman; Internet Association General Counsel Abigail Slater; and National Center for Missing & Exploited Children Senior Vice President and General Counsel Yiota Souras Location: Russell Senate Office Building, Rm 253, Washington, DC <http://commerce.senate.gov> <https://twitter.com/SenateCommerce>

2:30 PM Closed Briefing: Intelligence Matters Location: Rm 219, Hart Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://intelligence.senate.gov>

3:00 PM Senate Dems hold hearing on ways to protect and strengthen the right to vote – Democratic Policy and Communications Committee holds hearing on 'Voting Rights Under Fire: Democratic Ideas to Protect and Strengthen Americans' Constitutional Right to Vote', chaired by DPCC Chair Debbie Stabenow and fellow Democratic Sen. Amy Klobuchar. Witnesses include NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund President and Director-Counsel Sherrilyn Ifill, Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights President Vanita Gupta, NAACP Detroit Branch President Rev. Dr Wendell Anthony, Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund President and General Counsel Thomas Saenz, and Brennan Center Voting Rights and Election Project Manager of State Advocacy (and former West Virginia Secretary of State) Natalie Tennant Location: U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, SVC 212-210, Washington, DC dpcc.senate.gov

3:00 PM 'Addressing America's Opioid Problem: The Need for Evidence-Based Strategies' PCORI / Anthem briefing – 'Addressing America's Opioid Problem: The Need for Evidence-Based Strategies' briefing co-hosted by Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute and Anthem, on 'the importance and need for comparative effectiveness research to support evidence-based practices to address the opioid epidemic'. Speakers include Republican Sen. Shelley Moore Capito, Department of Veterans Affairs Health Services Research and Development Service Center for the Study of Healthcare Innovation, Implementation & Policy Associate Director Dr Stephanie Taylor, Women Veterans Comprehensive Health Center Medical Director Erin Krebs, Chronic Pain Research Alliance Director and co-founder Christin Veasley, PCORI Executive Director Joe Selby, and Anthem Vice President of Behavioral Health and Clinical Programs Sherry Dubester Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 430, Washington, DC www.pcori.org <https://twitter.com/PCORI>

US House: On recess until 25 September.

Other: 1:00 PM Romanian defense minister lays wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier – Romanian Defense Minister Mihai Fifor lays a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery, as part of his official visit to the U.S., with ceremony hosted by Joint Force Headquarters-National Capital Region and the U.S. Army Military District of Washington Commanding General Maj. Gen. Michael Howard Location: Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, VA <http://mdwhome.mdw.army.mil/> https://twitter.com/MDW_USARMY

4:00 PM Transport Secretary Chao participates in jobs discussion with Joe Biden – ‘Choosing a Future of Quality Jobs’ University of Delaware Biden Institute holds roundtable discussion hosted by former Vice President Joseph Biden, addressing the opportunities and challenges posed by transformations in the U.S. economy and how quality jobs can be created to support a growing middle class. Panelists include Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao, former Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Senior Executive Vice President Suzanne Clark, Service Employees International Union President Mary Kay Henry, MGM Resorts International Chairman and CEO Jim Murren, and Opportunity@Work President and co-founder Byron Auguste Location: Mitchell Hall, Newark, DE www.udel.edu <https://twitter.com/UDelaware>

7:45 PM Atlantic Council Global Citizen Awards Dinner – Atlantic Council Global Citizen Awards Dinner, honoring Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, South Korean President Moon Jae-in, and pianist and philanthropist Lang Lang for their ‘unique contributions toward improving the state of the world’. PM Trudeau’s award is presented by Queen Rania Al Abdullah of Jordan Location: New York, NY New York City <http://www.atlanticcouncil.org> [#ACAAwards](https://twitter.com/AtlanticCouncil)

Last Laughs

Late Night Political Humor.

James Corden: “In a speech to the United Nations General Assembly this morning, Donald Trump told world leaders that the UN needs to reform itself because it’s ineffective due to bureaucracy and mismanagement. And for the first time, every nation on Earth had a reason to come together to roll their eyes at Donald Trump.”

James Corden: “President Trump told the United Nations to reform itself, citing mismanagement. Then the United Nations told President Trump to reform himself, citing mismanagement.”

James Corden: “Now he’s calling Kim Jung-Un ‘Rocket Man.’ President Trump, you’ve already ruined enough, don’t ruin Elton John lyrics for us.”

James Corden: “Last night here in Los Angeles was the prime-time Emmy Awards. ...[Former White House Press Secretary Sean] Spicer won best actor in a comedy for his role in Donald Trump’s Administration.”

Trevor Noah: “It’s United Nations week, which means New York is going to be full of people from hundreds of different nations who can’t get convicted of crimes.”

Trevor Noah: “Every year, the leaders from around the world meet in New York at the UN to discuss major global issues, basically Comic-Con for diplomats.”

Trevor Noah: “Meet Steve Mnuchin, a man who got into politics the same way Trump did – by knowing nothing about politics.”

Jimmy Fallon: “The UN General Assembly kicked off today, and I read that 193 countries will be attending. They’re all committed to one goal, making New York City traffic a total nightmare.”

Jimmy Fallon: “One expert said that because of all the quick meetings, the General Assembly is like speed dating from hell.”

Jimmy Fallon: “After meeting with officials at the UN today, President Trump says there’s a good chance of peace in the Middle East. Then he was like, ‘The bad new is, I accidentally started a war with Greenland.’”

Conan O'Brien: "A lot of people are angry about Sean Spicer's cameo on last night's Emmys. People are mad about that. They're also not thrilled to hear that Attorney General Jeff Sessions will be hosting the Latin Grammys. Not happy about that."

Conan O'Brien: "Today in New York, President Trump spoke before the United Nations General Assembly. There was an awkward moment when Trump looked into the audience and said, 'How the hell did you people get into this country?'"

Conan O'Brien: "California Governor Jerry Brown is working on a plan to build two tunnels to bring water to southern California. Now, it's California, so one tunnel's for flat water. The other is sparkling with lime."

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